AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 8, please amend the sixth paragraph, continuing to page 9, as follows:

The phase patterning optical element can also be categorized as having a static or a dynamic surface. Examples of suitable static phase patterning optical elements include those with one or more fixed surface regions, such as gratings, including diffraction gratings, reflective gratings, and transmissive gratings, holograms, including polychromatic holograms, stencils, light shaping holographic filters, polychromatic holograms, lenses, mirrors, prisms, waveplates and the like. The static, transmissive phase patterning optical element 40, as shown in FIG. 4, is characterized by a fixed surface 41. However, in some embodiments, the phase patterning optical element itself is movable, thereby allowing for the selection of one more of the fixed surface regions 42-46 by moving the phase patterning optical element relative to the laser beam to select the appropriate region. The static phase patterning optical element may be attached to a spindle 47 and rotated with a controlled electric motor (not shown). The static phase patterning optical element in the embodiment shown in FIG. 4 has a fixed surface 41 and ~~discreet~~ discrete regions 42-46. In other embodiments of static phase patterning optical elements, either transmissive or reflective, the fixed surface 41 has a non-homogeneous surface containing substantially continuously varying regions, or a combination of ~~discreet~~ discrete regions, and substantially continuously varying regions.

Page 14, please amend the second full paragraph as follows.

In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 5B there is shown a staggered movement of the probes from a wide to narrow proximity. The staggered movement of the probes occurs in a

similar fashion as described in reference to FIG. 5A. However, the first region 42 now produces staggered optical traps with two probes 500 and 502 configured along a line P1, while a third probe 501 is configured at P2, a position between the two probes, but spaced apart from the line P1. As the probes are passed from a first set of optical traps to a second set and moved to second and subsequent positions, the staggered arrangement of the probes allows the probes to be packed densely without placing a set of traps in too close a proximity to two probes at the same time which could cause the probes to be contained by the wrong optical trap.